

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
/068 W

-----044684 132238Z /12

P R 132130Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4962  
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 3237

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, PINS, DR  
SUBJECT: DR ANXIOUSLY AWAITS ELECTORAL BOARD DECISION

REFS A. STANTO DOMINGO 2972, B. SANTO DOMINGO 3052, C. SANTO  
DOMINGO 3171

1. ANTONIO GUZMAN AND JACOBO MAJLUTA ARE WIDELY REFERRED TO AS  
"PRESIDENT ELECT" AND "VICE PRESIDENT ELECT" AND HAVE BEEN GIVEN  
CORRESPONDING TREATMENT BY PRESIDENT BALAGUER WHO A) SENT  
CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAMS TO GUZMAN AND MAJLUTAN B) RECEIVED  
GUZMAN TWICE IN THE NATIONAL PALACE AND AUTHORIZED HIM TO VISIT  
VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, AND C) ASSIGNED MIXED ARMED FORCES/  
POLICE SECURITY ESCORTS TO GUZMAN AND MAJLUTA. NEVERTHELESS, THE  
ELECTORAL SITUATION CONTINUES TO HANG IN SUSPENSE AS THE COUNTRY  
AWAITS THE FINAL OFFICIAL DECISION OF THE CENTRAL ELECTORAL BOARD  
(JCE). AND THE JCE'S VERDICT HAS BEEN DELAYED BY THE REFORMISTA  
PARTY LEGAL CHALLENGES (IMPUGNACIONES).

2. TO DATE, ACCORDING TO PRESS SOURCES, AT LEAST SEVENTEEN  
MUNICIPAL ELECTORAL BOARDS HAVE HEARD AND REJECTED REFORMISTA  
CHALLENGES TO THE ELECTIONS. MOST OF THESE CHALLENGES HAVE  
REPORTEDLY BEEN BASED ON STANDARD REFORMISTA AGRUMENTS CLAIMING  
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THAT THE SUPPOSEDLY HIGH RATE OF VOTER ABSTENTION IN THE  
MAY 16 ELECTION WAS CAUSED BY IRREGULARITIES IN THE VOTER REGIS-  
TRATION LISTS WHICH RESULTED IN ELECTORS LOSING THEIR VOTES  
INVOLUNTARILY. THE REFORMISTAS CALL FOR "COMPLEMENTARY ELECTIONS"  
TO ALLOW ONLY VOTERS WHO DID NOT VOTE TO CAST BALLOTS.

3. AT THE END OF LAST WEEK THE CENTRAL ELECTORA BOARD (JCE)

UNDER ITS INTERIM CHAIRMAN, HUGO VARGAS SUBERVI, SENT ITS INSPECTORS OUT TO COLLECT ALL DOCUMENTATION FROM THE MUNICIPAL BOARDS ON THEIR RULINGS. THE JCE HOPES TO BEGIN SCRUTINY OF THESE MATERIALS TODAY AND BEGIN RULING ON ANY APPEALS TO THE RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL BOARDS. INTERIM CHAIRMAN VARGAS SUBERVI TOLD REPORTERS YESTERDAY THAT HE HOPED THE JCE COULD GIVE A FINAL RULING ON THE ELECTIONS BY FRIDAY, JUNE 16, IN ORDER TO MEET THE 30 DAY DEADLINE SET BY THE ELECTION LAW FOR JCE FINAL ACTION. HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THE BOARD'S DECISION COULD TAKE SEVERAL ADDITIONAL DAYS, AN EVENTUALITY ALLOWED FOR UNDER THE LAW. VARGAS SUBERVI CALLED FOR THE CITIZENRY TO HAVE FAITH IN THE JCEM.

4. IT IS PRECISELY THIS QUESTION OF CONFIDENCE IN THE JCE WHICH HAS TROUBLED NOT ONLY THE PRD BUT ALSO GENERAL OPINION. SEVERAL RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE JCE, WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER, CONSTITUTE SOME CAUSE FOR CONCERN.

5. THE MOST SERIOUS OF THESE SETBACKS WAS THE TEMPORARY REMOVAL OF JCE CHAIRMAN MANUEL JOAQUIN CASTILLO (REF B). CASTILLO'S REMOVAL WAS TAKEN IN STRIDE, BUT IT HAS BEEN NOTED OF LATE THAT ALTHOUGH THE RESTRICTION ON HIM APPLIED ONLY TO HIS HEARING THE REFORMISTA ELECTORAL CHALLENGES, HE HAS IN EFFECT BEEN SUPPLANTED IN ALL HIS FUNCTIONS BY VARGAS SUBERVI.

6. THEN THERE WAS THE CASE OF THE DETENTION OF THE HEAD OF THE JCE COMPUTER CENTER BY THE POLICE SECRET SERVICE, WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

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TOOK IT UPON ITSELF TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES IN THE MAKING UP OF THE VOTER REGISTRATION LISTS. ALTHOUGH THE FUNCTIONARY WAS RELEASED JUNE 7 AFTER FIVE DAYS OF QUESTIONING, HE AS WELL AS THE HEAD OF THE VOTER REGISTRY (HIS IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR) WERE IMMEDIATELY SUSPENDED IN THEIR FUNCTIONS BY VARGAS SUBERVI, AND THE JCE BEGAN ITS OWN INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES IN THE VOTER LISTS. HOWEVER, THE ROLE OF THE POLICE SECRET SERVICE DID NOT END THERE. TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS THE PRESENCE OF SECRET SERVICE AGENTS IN THE JCE COMPUTER CENTER AND SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS BY THE POLICE SPOKESMAN AND VARGAS SUBERVI AS TO THEIR ROLE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 3237

7. THIRDLY, CONCERN HAS BEEN CAUSED BY THE NOW FAMOUS CASE OF THE TWO VERSIONS OF THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE IN WHICH LAST YEAR'S REVISIONS OF THE ELECTORAL LAW WERE PRINTED (REF B). THE WHOLE INCIDENT HAS BEEN LABELED HERE "EL GAZETAZO." UNCOVERING OF THE "FALSE" GAZETTE BY PRO-PRD LAWYERS SERVED ORIGINALLY TO DISCREDIT THE REFORMISTA EFFORT TO CALL FOR "COMPLEMENTARY ELECTIONS," PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THE SECRETARY OF THE JCE, MR DIAZ ADAMS, AND INTERIM CHAIRMAN VARGAS SUBERVI WERE QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS DECLARING THE "ORIGINAL" GAZETTE CARRIED THE TRUE VERSION OF THE LAW. HOWEVER, OVER THE WEEKEND, VARGAS SUBERVI DENIED HAVING TAKEN A POSITION OF THE GAZETTES AND ANNOUNCED THAT DIAZ ADAMS, IN HIS FUNCTION AS JCE SECRETARY, WAS NOT AUTHORIZED TO SPEAK FOR THE BOARD. DIAZ ADAMS COUNTERED BY CLAIMING REPORTERS HAD TAPED VARGAS SUBERVI'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS AUTHORIZING HIM TO SPEAK FOR THE BOARD ON THE MATTER. HOWEVER, VARGAS SUBERVI HAD THE LAST WORD YESTERDAY WHEN HE "ACCEPTED" DIAZ ADAMS' IMMEDIATE "RETIREMENT" FROM THE BOARD.

8. A WIDELY HELD RATIONALE FOR VARGAS SUBERVI'S APPARENT REVERSAL OF POSITIONS OVER THE GAZETTE, IS THE THREAT REPORTEDLY MADE BY REFORMISTA LEGAL ADVISOR "VINCHO" CASTILLO THAT HE WOULD LEVEL A CHALLENGE (RECUSACION), SIMILAR TO THE ACTION AGAINST MANUEL JOAQUIN CASTILLO, AGAINST ANY MEMBER OF THE JCE WHO VOICED JUDGE-CONFIDENTIAL

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MENTS OVER THE MATTE OF WHICH OF THE TWO GAZETTES WAS AUTHENTIC.

9. THUS, WHAT HAS BEEN SEEN IS A GRADUAL EROSION OF THE JCE'S POWER VIS-A-VIS THE REFORMISTA ONSLAUGHT AND THE NEUTRALIZATION THROUGH ONE MEANS OR ANOTHER OF KEY BOARD FUNCTIONARIES. THE OPPOSITION NEVER HAD MUCH FAITH IN THE JCE TO BEGIN WITH SINCE ITS MEMBERS WERE ALL APPOINTED BY PRESIDENT BALAGUER AND HAVE TIES TO THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN FEARED BY THE PRD AND OTHERS THAT IF PUT UNDER PRESSURE THE BOARD WOULD CEDE TO THE REFORMISTAS.

10. THE SITUATION TODAY, THEREFORE, IS MORE UNCERTAIN THAN IT WAS LAST WEEK, AND ALL EYES REMAIN FIXED ON THE JCE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF DECISIONS FROM THE BOARD. THE BOARD WILL SOON BE RULING ON REFORMISTA CHALLENGES, MAY BE ASKED TO RULE ON THE QUESTION OF THE GAZETTES AND ULTIMATELY MAKE A DETERMINATION ON WHETHER TO CALL FOR "COMPLEMENTARY ELECTIONS." IF THE JCE MERELY CONFIRMS THE PATTERN ESTABLISHED TO DATE BY THE MUNICIPAL BOARDS OF REJECTING REFORMISTA CHALLENGES THE COUNTRY WILL MOVE QUICKLY TOWARDS MUCH DESIRED POLITICAL STABILITY AND A RETURN TO MORE NORMAL ECONOMIC LIFE. HOWEVER, SHOULD THE JCE DECISIONS LARGELY FAVOR THE REFORMISTAS, WIDELY CONSIDERED AN UNLIKELY THOUGH STILL POSSIBLE OCCURRENCE, THE DR WILL FACE CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY WHICH COULD LEAD TO MORE SERIOUS POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES.

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## Message Attributes

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